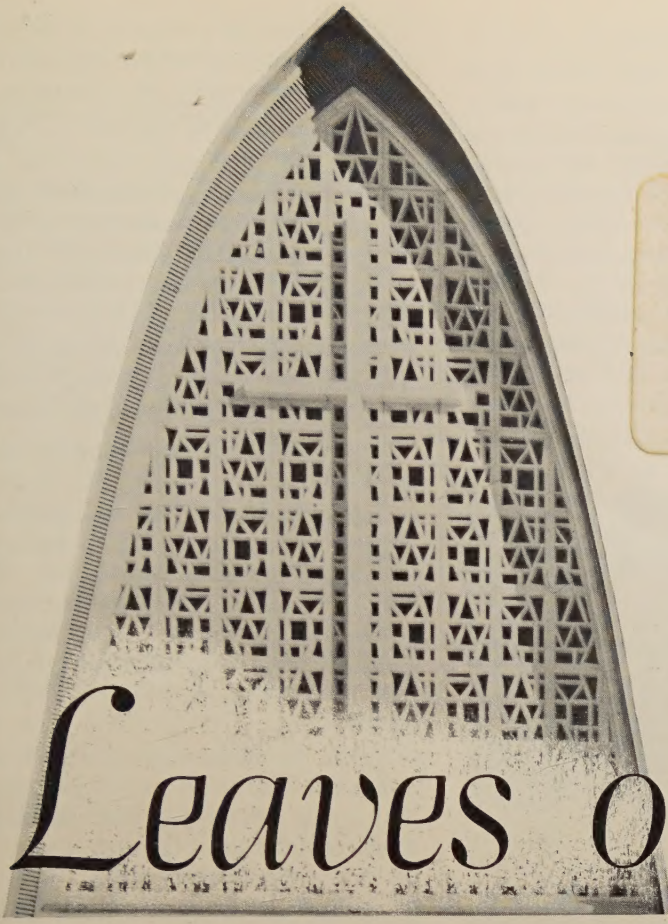


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Leaves of Healing

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Report of World Tour Taken by General Overseer and Mrs. Carl Q. Lee

Australia

To compress within the restrictions of a written report the experiences Mrs. Lee and I enjoyed on our recent world tour, or to recount our impressions gained in such diverse places as South Africa and Israel presents a near impossible task. There is, however, much that can be said and shared and this we will do to the best of our ability.

On the third of March (1975) we flew from Chicago to San Francisco where we changed planes for our transpacific flight to Australia via Hawaii and Fiji. Losing one calendar day crossing the international date line, we arrived in Melbourne the afternoon of March 5, to be greeted by a group of our Australian fellowship led by Elder and Mrs. Noel F. Smith. These are old and well-loved friends, most of



General Overseer and Mrs. Carl Q. Lee upon their return from their world tour

whom we had not seen since 1966, when we had previously visited "down under". It was a heartwarming and joyous renewal of relationships with those who met us and later with a much larger group who had assembled at the home of Elder Smith for a sumptuous meal and a time of delightful fellowship.

There followed two full weeks of visitation, fellowship, and ministry at Surrey Hills and Mt. Evelyn that has left us with a growing sense of nostalgia. On Lord's Day, March 9, during the worship service at Surrey Hills, three young men were ordained to the diaconate: Wesley Briggs, David Shaw and Mervyn Smith. We were impressed with the sincerity and commitment of these new officers.

We were privileged to visit with Overseer Stanley Smith, who had suffered a severe illness following the death of his wife Miriam. He has gained a near full recovery and is much like his old self again.



Elder Noel F. Smith, Overseer Lee,
Overseer Stanley Smith

It must be mentioned too that wherever we went we were told of the dedicated and deeply appreciated ministry of Overseer and Mrs. Leland Barton, who, after nearly four years in charge of the Australian work of the Christian Catholic Church, have returned to the United States and resumed their ministry for the church in the southwest.

The night we left Australia for South Africa more than forty of the fellowship assembled at the airport to bid us good-bye. Our hearts were deeply touched by the clear evidence of their love and it was with tears that we finally boarded the plane for the next segment of our journey.

South Africa

The late night flight from Melbourne to Johannesburg, South Africa, brought us to the Jan Smuts Airport the morning of March 20th. We were met by Rev. and Mrs. Edgar Mahon, Rev. Lyle Mahon and his young son, David. From that moment until we left for Israel we were constantly on the move. The focus of our attention was the work and personnel of the Mahon Missions.

Covering a triangle of territory from Johannesburg to Durban and back to Bethlehem, South Africa, we traveled approximately two thousand miles. This included trips along the coast both north and south of Durban. We were privileged to visit a number of the Mahon Mission churches and also to contact some people connected with the Amazioni movement.

Throughout Easter week we participated in services at Umlazi, Harrismith and Dube. In addition we visited several other churches of the Mahon Mission and altogether we were given a fairly comprehensive view of the physical composition of the work.

At all times we were in close contact with the mission staff. While we were in Durban and environs, Rev. and Mrs. Gerald Lee were our hosts and guides. Not only did we get excellent insights into the Mahon work in Natal but we also were able to attend services under the auspices of the Amazioni. In these contacts we made it very clear that all who wished any relationship with the Christian Catholic Church in Zion must work with and through the Mahon Mission and its leadership.



Johannesburg, South Africa. The Mahons: Edgar, Annette, Carol, Jonathan, Lyle, Sandy, David

It was most pleasant to be with the Lees. It gave us an opportunity to exchange many recollections of our days together in Zion Preparatory College.

We were also privileged to meet with Rev. and Mrs. Joubert and listen to ringing testimonies of God's grace and guidance in their ministry in Natal.

Palm Sunday we worshiped at the Unlazi church and heard some of the fine choir work various churches of the mission in this area are doing.

Leaving Natal, we returned to the Orange Free State and the Headquarters of the Mahon Missions at Etembenni to make preparations for the Good Friday services at Harrismith and the Easter Sunday gathering at the church in Dube.

Both of these services involved much in the way of preparation. Not only as far as the messages were concerned but also in terms of accommodating large numbers of people for a noonday meal. These services were attended by nearly a thousand people in each instance, yet the meetings and meals were handled smoothly and efficiently. All who attended were fed and well filled both spiritually and physically. The Easter week services were all marked by a strong response from the congregation to the earnest calls to commitment given by the leaders. At each meeting there were those who came forward, some to indicate acceptance of Christ as Lord, and others to renew previous commitments and indeed God was present to bless!

Our visit all too rapidly drew to a close and though both Edgar and Lyle Mahon are deeply involved in the scheduled program of the mission, they were most generous in giving time to us to assure that we would be as fully informed as possible.

We were privileged to visit with Alfred Mahon, now retired, whose life and career in the work of the mission goes back to its very beginnings. His recollections and clear recounting of them gave a well-defined picture of the early connection with the Christian Catholic Church and subsequent developments which are bringing the Ma-

hon Missions and our church back into a viable working relationship.

Before we left there was a gathering of friends at the airport to bid reluctant farewells that were filled with the hope and anticipation of a future renewal. Among those who came to see us off were Mr. and Mrs. Harold Mason, as well as Pastor Kandume who is ministering in a new work recently begun in South West Africa under the auspices of the Mahons.

As a result of this firsthand encounter with the work of the Mahon Mission, it is strongly recommended that those of our fellowship who wish to make contributions to this work should do so through the Christian Catholic Church, indicating on a tithe card the amount of the gift. Each month we will forward the accumulated offerings to the Mahon Mission Board in the U.S. which will forward the funds to Africa.

Israel

The flight from Johannesburg to Tel Aviv took us due north, via Nairobi, Kenya, to the Red Sea, thence northwest to Israel. We arrived at the Ben Gurion Airport the morning of April 1st where we were met by Mr. and Mrs. Nicolas Khayat, and son Christo, Alfred Khayat and Pastor Nassar. Though we had never personally met any of these we were quickly made to feel that we were among old friends. Throughout our entire visit every effort was made to insure that we see as many of the historic sites as possible. There were times when we felt that many of the historic places pertaining to events in the life of our Lord were obscured by ornate cathedrals or huge stone basilicas, which in reality did more to hide than to accentuate the places made important by events in the life of Christ. There were many things, however, that remain much the same as they were two thousand years ago. The plains of Jericho, the hills of Galilee and the sea of Galilee itself, the wilderness of Judea and the rugged shores of the Dead Sea, all must appear today much as they were in Jesus' day. The bustle, noise and smells of the narrow streets of the Old City of Jerusalem, though colored by the things of today, would undoubtedly

ly seem familiar to someone out of that earlier time.

We traveled to Bethlehem where we were again privileged to meet with brother Bishara Nassar and his lovely family. He is the minister in charge of our work in Israel. While in Bethlehem, we visited the Church of the Nativity and several other buildings of note, all of which added to our growing appreciation of the historical impact of these places so intimately associated with the lives of David and Jesus.



Pastor and Mrs. S. Bishara D. Nassar and family, Bethlehem, Israel

Hebron claimed our attention too, with its reminders of the parts played by Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Sarah and others who formed the warp and woof of the Old Testament tapestry.

To the south we visited the hot and arid wastes of the Judean wilderness, the Dead Sea and the ruins of tragic Massada where the self-inflicted death of its last defenders took place, giving to Titus' Romans the empty victory, in 73 A.D., of taking a fortress filled with Jewish dead.

Returning to Jerusalem by way of Jericho, we were refreshed by the cool waters of Elisha's spring and reminded too of God's divine intervention that toppled the walls of the city and gave Israel its first great victory in Canaan.

Once again in Jerusalem we walked the top of the Old City wall from Herod's Gate to the Damascus Gate. We followed the "way of the cross" to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre and sat, gratefully, alone before the "Garden Tomb" and knew that it was empty — not because the body of our Lord was stolen — but because He had risen from the dead. In the quietness of that short hour there came to us a deep reassurance that "He is risen indeed!"

Our next adventure took us to the north through the old cities of Sychar, Nazareth and on to the Sea of Galilee to visit Tiberias and Capernaum.

We were privileged to visit an Israeli kibutz on the eastern shore of Galilee and see for ourselves that under the hand of Jews today the desert is being made "to blossom as the rose".

We were moved too, as we viewed the Golan Heights to a better understanding of why Israel today keeps this high ground for its own protection.

Leaving Galilee, we stopped at a high vantage point and looked back over the sea and the surrounding hills. Certainly the sea and the hills have not changed much since Jesus ministered in the shore cities and sailed its waters. For a few precious moments we were one with the time when He was there.

We drove then to the Mediterranean port of Haifa. En route we passed the village of Nain, the plains of Esdraelon and the valley of Megiddo, our minds and hearts were stirred by our anticipations of the mighty events prophetically scheduled to take place in that historic valley.

Reaching Haifa, we drove up to the top of Mt. Carmel and looked out over the lovely view of the city and harbor, remembering the great account of Elijah's contest with the priests of Baal. We also noted a grim reminder of the troubled present — lying at anchor in the harbor was a submarine — sinister, efficient instrument of war bespeaking Israel's preparedness for whatever eventuality.

Leaving Haifa and Mount Carmel, we drove south along the Mediterranean coast to Tel Aviv. At times the late afternoon air was heavy with the scent of citrus blossoms and we were reminded again that the people of Israel have by ingenuity, hard work, and solid practical know-how, transformed the land of their fathers into a productive land that more than cares for its people and yields enough for export.

Though our stop in Tel Aviv was very short, we were able to sense the very modern character of the city. Architecture, traffic, hotels

and homes all were in the framework of the twentieth century and in startling contrast with Jerusalem and its tenacious hold on the ancient past.

Another observation must be related. Wherever we went the Israeli Military were unobtrusively evident. On patrol or on the move otherwise, they were at all times well disciplined and self-confident. The Israeli fighting force, even to the untrained eye is clearly a military factor to be reckoned with.

Back in Jerusalem, we revisited the temple area and other places of particular interest always realizing that time limitations would prevent us from seeing many of the historic sites. We were delighted to meet some of the people who were associated with the work of the Christian Catholic Church earlier, and also, to meet with the congregation presently pastored by brother Nassar.

At last the time of departure was at hand and again it was a farewell to friends that left us with a desire to return, to steep ourselves again in the atmosphere of this land and place — so precious, both historically and in prophetic anticipation.

England

After the interesting and, in some degree, trying experiences of the very necessary security checks as we left Israel, we were delighted with our daylight flight across the Mediterranean and Europe to England. Arriving at Heath Row Airport in mid-afternoon, we were met by our daughter Mrs. Donn Burrows, whom we had not seen for over four years.

Gratefully we were able to relax and catch our breath for a moment or two before launching into our visit in England.

Since childhood I have had a desire to visit Britain and though our stay was brief it did afford a fulfillment of that long held desire.

With our daughter as our guide we were able to see many points of interest in London and its environs, and to meet with a number of old time members of the Christian Catholic Church. We spent a most pleasant evening with Mr. and Mrs. George Colville and Mrs. Lena Simpson. Later we took a train to Leeds where we spent an enjoyable



Remains of St. Patrick's Chapel, Heysham, Lancashire, England

weekend with Elder and Mrs. Arthur Murton and their daughter Daphne. While we were in this area we had a pleasant visit with Miss Ida Hepworth and her sister Mrs. Leathly. From Leeds we again took a train and traveled to Lancaster where we spent an all too short time renewing our acquaintance with Mr. and Mrs. Stanley Robson and with their daughter and family, Mr. and Mrs. Glynne Edwards and daughter, Priscilla.

While in the Lancaster area we were privileged to visit many places of interest, including the little stone chapel at Morecambe, which a few years ago celebrated over a thousand years of unbroken Christian worship. We also had the pleasure of visiting with Mr. and Mrs. Wilbur Shearing and Miss Ruth Laythem.

Returning to London we were again with our daughter and her husband, Commander Donn T. Burrows and our grandson Mark. Mr. Tim Hollingshead, who is studying in London, came out to our daughter's home and had din-

ner with us. We were also able to contact Captain Stephen Leech, the son of Mr. and Mrs. Ray Leech. Captain Leech is with the U.S. Air Force and stationed in England.

At last we were homeward bound, flying the great northern circle over Iceland, Greenland, Canada, and the Great Lakes, to arrive in Chicago on April 26. We were met by our son and his wife, Mr. and Mrs. Carl Q. Lee, Jr. There is no adequate way to express our thanks to the many members of our fellowship who so generously contributed to make this trip possible. To each of them we again voice our appreciation and pray that someday we shall in a good measure be a greater blessing to all of you.

We thank God with a full heart for the privilege and joy this beautiful trip afforded us and full thanks to God too for His watch-care and safekeeping. As beautiful as everything on the trip was — home was the most beautiful of all!

The Work of Christian Catholic Church in Japan

(Past, Present and Future)

Clark B. Offner

In the summer of 1953, following one and a half years of language study in Tokyo, Barbara and I and our six week old son boarded an express train for the five hour trip to Kariya, a small city of about

30,000 people near Nagoya in the central area of Japan between Tokyo and Kyoto. In this churchless community, with its numerous factories surrounded by rice paddies, we had rented an apartment



Overseer and Mrs. Clark B. Offner, Kariya Church Garden

in a Japanese house for a monthly rental of less than \$8.50. Not long after our arrival, we both purchased bicycles to provide us with transportation. We were informed that there were fewer than five privately owned automobiles in the whole city at that time. Barbara did her cooking on a simple, three-burner kerosene stove in a little 6 x 9 ft. room we used as our kitchen. We had to boil our water before drinking it and, of course, there was no flush toilet. Laundry was done by hand. Sliding doors made of paper with wooden strip edges formed the inner "walls" of our four rooms, one of which we tried to keep warm during the winter with a small, kerosene heater.

It was in our 12 x 12 ft. living room that the first meetings of the Christian Catholic Church in Japan were held in September, 1953. The curious folk who came to those first Bible Classes — where the New Testament was taught in simple English in some classes and in poor Japanese in others — had to pass through our bedroom to get into the living room. Some of them enjoyed pulling back a separating curtain to get a glimpse of our golden-haired baby, sleeping or playing in his crib. Obviously, it was not only a desire to study the Bible or to learn about Christianity that motivated many of these early visitors. As the only Caucasians living in that city, our family and our lifestyle projected a kind of exotic attraction that artificially swelled the numbers of "seekers".

Before a year had passed, we had begun to rent another house for use as a meeting place and were engaged in a weekly schedule which included Sunday Worship Services, Sunday School and Prayer Meeting as well as the Bible Classes. Sunday Evening Services, a Youth Group and a Women's Group were added later. By the time of our first furlough in the summer of 1957, a church building had been erected on land purchased with funds remitted from the home church. During that year's furlough, Pastor Ito, from an independent church in Nagoya, some 20 miles away, came out to hold services on Sunday afternoons and one weeknight in our absence.

During our second term of service, as an outreach of the Church in Kariya, we began holding meetings for children, young people and adults in the neighboring towns of Takahama and Chiryu as well as developing the work in Kariya. To carry on the work during our second furlough, Mr. Tanihiro, formerly a Southern Baptist pastor, commuted regularly from Nagoya to the Kariya area. He continued to assist us throughout our third term and again ministered in our absence during our third furlough.

It was our aim from the beginning to establish an indigenous church under Japanese leadership that was not dependent upon foreign assistance. During both of our first two terms, we were temporarily assisted by young Bible School graduates whom we hoped would develop into pastors of the church there, but this did not work out as anticipated. During the period when funds were not required for a Japanese worker, regular monthly remittances were sent by the Japanese church to help support a Christian Catholic Church worker in the Philippines. Throughout the years, the only special remittances from the U.S. (apart from our allowance) have been for the purchase of the church lot in Kariya during our first term and for the purchase of a small, used car for Pastor Tomita during our last term. A loan was received from the home church when the church building in Kariya was erected amounting to one-half the construction cost. Subsequently, the loan was repaid by the Kariya congregation into a re-

volving fund with which land was purchased in Takahama and a small meeting place was erected there.

Despite numerous vicissitudes along the way, we believe that our goal of an indigenous church has now been accomplished. Two years ago this spring, Shozaburo Tomita, his wife, Toyoko, and their two daughters moved into the parsonage which had been erected next to the Kariya Church with funds raised by the congregation there. Since the church is unable to provide the complete living expenses for his family, however, he must supplement his income from the church with part-time employment. The church in Japan is now a legal religious body with Pastor Tomita as the official representative and a Board of Directors who also serve as church officers. Regular church activities which are being carried on under Pastor Tomita's supervision



Pastor Tomita

in both Kariya and Takahama include Sunday Schools, Worship Services, Bible Study/Prayer Meetings, Youth and Women's Groups and meetings in the homes of church members. With a view to the further expansion of the work there, Pastor Tomita has been emphasizing the development of lay leaders who may effectively function as Bible teachers or evangelists.

Quite extraordinary changes have taken place in Japan in the quarter-century since we arrived there. Kariya is now a city of over 80,000 with countless privately owned cars and with few homes that do not have at least one color television set as well as an electric washing machine and a gas stove. One would be unlikely to find an apartment of comparable size to rent for less

than 12 times what we paid when we moved there. (Since our second term, we have been living in Nagoya, a city of 2 million inhabitants, where our children attended school.) It now takes only two hours by train to cover the more than 200 miles between Tokyo and Nagoya. Material affluence has also affected the mental outlook of the people. They are no longer either material or spiritual paupers who must seek satisfaction from beyond their own national boundaries. The era of self-doubt and spiritual bewilderment has passed. Historic traditions have been reconsidered and a new sense of national pride has developed. Such developments, accompanied by increasing doubts regarding the moral character of the so-called Christian countries of the West, have lessened the earlier fascination with Christianity.

From the time of the reopening of Japanese doors to Western influence in the middle of the 19th century, Christian missionary activities (including the work of churches, schools, hospitals and other social welfare agencies) have met with varying results, depending upon the era as well as the particular area, personnel and methods used. Although the influence of Christian thought and a sympathetic understanding of Christian ideals is widespread, the result of the past 115 years of missionary work (Protestant missionaries first entered Japan in 1859; Roman Catholic work began some 300 years earlier but was subsequently outlawed for 200 years) in terms of church membership is approximately 1% of the present Japanese population of some 110,000,000. This percentage includes all groups that consider themselves Christian — whether Greek/Russian Orthodox, Roman Catholic, Protestant, Mormons, Jehovah's Witnesses, or the Holy Spirit Association for the Unification of World Christianity of the Korean "Prophet", Sun Myung Moon. The 1974 Japan Christian Year-book lists about 8000 churches and preaching stations, close to 25,000 Japanese pastors and evangelists and approximately 2600 missionaries. Despite all the activities of these churches and their clergy plus the influence of hundreds of Christian educational institutions upon their hundreds of thousands

of students, the Christian yearbook indicates that there has been a decrease in the "Christian" population of Japan from 1.102% to 1.067% of the total population between 1971 and 1973. This is quite a contrast with the situation in South Korea, just across the Tsushima Strait, where Christianity is probably the most vital, organized religious force in the country.

The traditional missionary methods used in Japan have been patterned on the type of church programs and evangelistic activities developed in the Western countries from which the missionaries came. Even in the sending countries, however, certain modes of evangelism and church extension were the peculiar products of the particular circumstances in which they were generated. They have been considerably modified in the lands of their origin and there is no theological necessity for transplanting them to a foreign country with a quite dissimilar culture. If they are tried and found to be effective, there is reason to continue to use them and to develop them further. If, on the other hand, they do not appear to be productive, it would seem advisable to consider other approaches that may be more in keeping with the thought patterns and cultural background of the people among whom the missionary is working. It is, after all, not a Western life-style or Western ways of doing things that we are seeking to transmit, but the Good News of God's love and of the new life to be found when men and women experience that love as it was revealed in Jesus Christ.

Various reasons may be cited for the lack of a greater response to Christian evangelistic activity in Japan — as reflected in formal membership in religious bodies. In the first place, Japan has a long, respected tradition which, whether one consciously recognizes it or not, permeates the atmosphere. This tradition blends historical, mythological, aesthetic, economic, patriotic, domestic, social and religious strains into an inseparable mixture. In a culture where so much emphasis is placed on deep respect or even worship of one's ancestors and ancestral heritage, any new thought which openly and directly attacks, opposes, questions

or stimulates conflict with the venerable tradition will find it difficult to gain formally related adherents. If the decision to become a Christian seems to involve a separation from or denial of one's ancestral heritage (whether this is explicitly stated or merely implied), a "genuine" Japanese will find it difficult to formally identify himself with a Christian organization even though he may be very sympathetic to its high ideals and humanitarian concerns.

Closely related to this respect for tradition is a deep sense of being a part of a community. Not only does the Japanese feel himself a part of a revered, historic tradition, he is also at the present time, an integral part of a cohesive social unit. As a member of a family, a neighborhood association, a school or company, he does not function as a lone individual but is bound by the communal mores that hold the group together. Independent action punctures this cohesive film and the unity of the community is disturbed if not destroyed. Since communal spirit and mutual consensus is of such importance, it is difficult for an individual, who is an essential part of a social unit, to break with his comrades to go his own way religiously.

A third factor is the existence of a variety of religious alternatives. In some respects, the Japanese are a very religious people. Viable, religious options for present-day Japanese range from very primitive forms of folk religion, fortune telling and superstition to highly developed and philosophically respectable religious doctrines. Most Japanese, by birth, are related to the formal practices of both Shintoism and Buddhism. Various active religious movements that have arisen or experienced a rebirth since the end of the war have enjoyed a particular popularity among the common man. In distinction with those lands in which the Christian missionary is confronted by a single religious form or only primitive beliefs, the wide spectrum of religious faiths in Japan — including those of deeply rooted tradition and lofty development, makes the missionary's task more difficult, for it is easier for a "genuine" Japanese to seek religious solace or enlightenment in a religion that has roots in his own



Bible Study led by layman, Kariya

culture rather than in one from abroad.

The Japanese tend to be very adaptable, eclectic and pragmatic. They are able and willing to accept new ways and truths if they are seen to be useful or beneficial — particularly in the “here and now”. If something clearly works better and more effectively than what is more familiar, they are willing to change. The change, however, is usually a modification of the new to make it fit into the traditional structure rather than accepting it just as it was presented in its foreign form. This process of borrowing and adapting from other cultures (especially from the West in the past century) has resulted in the enrichment of Japanese life without an essential loss of its peculiar Japanese quality. So it is that many Christian concepts have already been incorporated into Japanese thought life (like the Confucianism and Buddhism of centuries ago) even though Westernized Christianity itself has not been accepted. Furthermore, if the beneficial effects, in terms of the ethical quality of life, of the religion of “Christian” nations were as clearly seen as the evident benefits of Western science and technology, the effect upon Japan would be considerable.

A fifth factor has also been implied in the foregoing description. It is the high level of education and civilization of the Japanese people. The Western Christian who goes to Japan with the feeling that the superiority of his intellectual, cultural, religious heritage will quickly be evident and a Christian conquest of an inferior thought and life pattern will soon be accomplished is in for a rude awakening. Literacy in Japan, despite the difficulty of its language, is close to

100% — one of the highest national averages throughout the world. Educational facilities and the accouterments of civilization are not inferior to those in the West. In fact, there is much that the West can learn from Japan.

There are many other elements that could be noted, including the general outlook and problems characterizing modern, science-oriented, secular society in the West as well as other advanced, industrialized countries. Yet, these are sufficient to indicate some of the particular factors that affect the Japanese response to the traditional methods of Christian evangelistic endeavor.



Women's Group, Takahama

In the light of the experience of the Christian Church in Japan over the past century, it is not strange that methods of Christian witness have been and still are being reevaluated. Coffee houses, student centers, labor centers, welfare centers and retreat houses, where a less direct and thus less offensive approach is made, have been established. Their effectiveness must be measured in the light of their aim — which is not necessarily that of adding names to church membership rolls. Our own hope is that when we return to Japan we will be able to engage in a type of ministry somewhat different from that of our more direct evangelistic, church planting efforts of the past. Now that a Japanese Church under Japanese leadership has been established, the ongoing development of that more traditional ministry can be done more effectively by the Japanese Christians themselves, although we would be available for consultation and supervision as needed.

The specific nature of our new sphere of Christian witness is still unclear, but we hope it will permit the full utilization of the peculiar

gifts we possess, the particular studies we have pursued and the personal experiences we have accumulated during our past years of ministry in Japan. Along with our primary endeavor to establish a healthy, indigenous, Japanese church with an ongoing ministry, we have also been engaged in other activities that, God willing, should fit us for an increasingly effective ministry in the future.

My research into Japanese religions, both traditional and modern, has resulted in the publication of a book (*Modern Japanese Religions*, Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1963), two chapters contributed to another book (*The World's Religions*, London: Inter-Varsity Press, 1975) and a number of articles in religious journals. It has also brought me into personal contact with many religious leaders on a local and national level. I have visited numerous Shinto shrines, Buddhist temples and the headquarters as well as the local meeting places of many “new religions”. I have studied their writings and engaged their priests, lay leaders and common believers in extended conversation. I have lectured on the subject of Japanese religions at colleges and universities in both the United States and Japan and have also taught a course in the Bible in a Japanese university. My experience in helping to establish and continuing to be officially associated with the Nagoya International School, a private institution with an American-style curriculum for children of various nationalities from nursery school through Grade 12, has brought me into contact with political and business leaders in the Nagoya region — Japan's third largest metropolitan area. I have also written articles in Japanese for publication in vernacular magazines and newspapers. Barbara has been active in the ministry of the Nagoya Union Church and participated in activities of international women's clubs. She has also functioned effectively as a teacher of English in Japanese kindergartens and to women's groups as well as a tutor to children.

As we consider our future ministry in Japan, we hope to make effective use of this unique background. While the details of our anticipated service remain unclear

and may continue to be so until we return and actually begin, we can envision a ministry involving some, if not all, of the following elements:

1) Continuing research on Japanese religions and culture with special emphasis on their relation to Christianity;

2) Writing for periodicals on religious, cultural and Christian topics;

3) Strengthening personal contacts with influential individuals on various levels and in different areas of Japanese society;

4) Encouraging and engaging in open dialogue with educated men and women of other religions — including religious scholars and professional clergy;

5) Organizing Bible Study/Religious Discussion Groups not officially related to a church organization nor serving as a “feeder” to a particular church group;

6) Lecturing in one or more universities in the field of religion or Bible;

7) Speaking to public groups such as PTAs, cultural/religious groups, student groups, women’s groups and fraternal organizations;

8) Teaching classes or tutoring in English conversation;

9) Working as an English secretary.

To function effectively and to develop a good rapport with certain individuals and groups, it might be preferable to be supported (at least partially) by an educational, cultural or even commercial institution rather than a church body, pure and simple, if that could be worked out.

While some mission boards send out medical missionaries to minister to the sick, educational missionaries to teach in schools, professional missionaries with other specialties such as agriculture or linguistics, and missionaries assigned specifically to assist in welfare institutions or to work with students, servicemen and women, minority groups, etc., our Church missionary program has generally stressed the more direct, evangelistic church planting method. However, our orphanage and schools in the



Shinto Shrine, Nagoya

Philippines and Guyana show that we have not been limited to only one mode of operation. There are few, if any, missionaries of any denomination whose mission has been specifically to those in positions of religious or community leadership. It is to such a group that we feel we may be able to make a meaningful witness. Our aim in this would not be the establishment of another church nor adding formal members to an established church. Rather, it would be to effectively establish a Christian presence in a notably unevangelized segment of an important, non-Christian nation. Who knows what might be the result if even a few key leaders would open their hearts to the Gospel?

More particularly, the following might be considered as some of the aims to be realized through such a ministry:

1) To learn from as well as to teach others in seeking to apprehend more of God’s truths;

2) To contribute to a better mutual understanding among men of different religions and cultures;

3) To uncover common elements upon which agreement may be achieved;

4) To clearly indicate the nature of the crucial differences that separate us;

5) To give a positive witness to the truth of the Christian faith;

6) To teach and disseminate Christian doctrine in a way that will be conducive to its being clearly heard, seriously considered and

responded to in an affirmative manner;

7) To express in practical ways love and concern issuing from Christian faith;

8) To exert a Christian influence upon all with whom we have contact;

9) To introduce men and women to Jesus Christ and invite them into the fellowship of His Church.

In our day there is a special need for greater understanding and openness among peoples of diverse religious and cultural backgrounds. We would like to make a meaningful contribution to that end while we continue to serve as faithful witnesses to Jesus Christ and as trustworthy representatives of the Christian Catholic Church. During our year’s furlough in the United States, we will be thinking and praying more definitely about the nature of our future ministry in Japan. We would appreciate whatever honest, constructive suggestions or advice those of you who have patiently struggled through to the end of this article might be able to give us. We also solicit your prayers for us as we continue our consideration of the future and for Pastor Tomita and the Christian Catholic Church in Japan, especially during our separation from them.



Buddhist statue